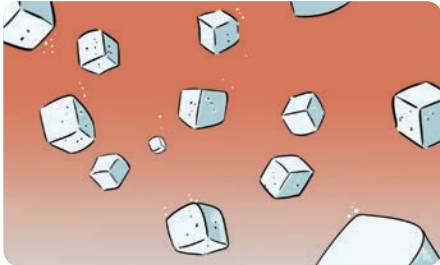


1 - What diabetes is

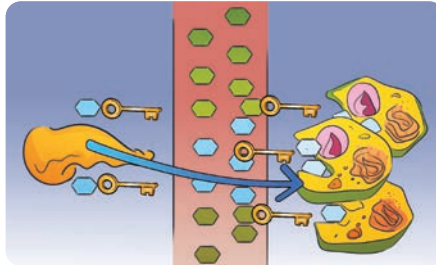
“Diabetes mellitus” is a condition of chronic hyperglycaemia (high blood sugar levels) that causes the appearance of a series of complications and their gradual progression.

If the condition is well controlled, it is possible to live with it: people with diabetes can work, do sport and have healthy children.

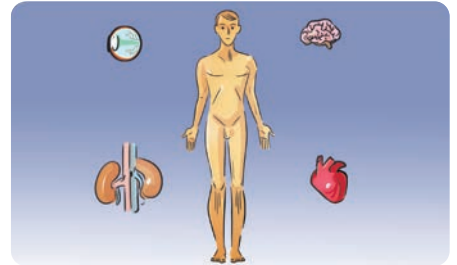
What is diabetes?



It is an illness characterised by excessively high levels of glucose (sugar) in the blood, caused by a deficiency in the secretion of insulin, a hormone produced by the pancreas that reduces blood glucose levels.



Insulin allows glucose to pass from the blood into the cells, where it is converted into energy. If insulin is not produced, does not work properly or is inadequate for the person's needs, blood glucose levels rise and hyperglycaemia occurs.



Ultimately, if blood glucose levels remain high, damage to the eyes, heart, kidneys, brain and feet can occur (complications of diabetes).

The different types of diabetes



Type 1 diabetes mellitus (T1DM), which usually appears at a young age, is characterised by the absence of insulin secretion, and can only be treated by administering it from the outside.



Type 2 diabetes mellitus (T2DM), which is often associated with obesity or being overweight, is the more common form and has a hereditary/ familial origin. | Secondary diabetes is a consequence of the intake of medicines (cortisone, etc.) and/or endocrine or pancreatic diseases.



Gestational diabetes (GDM) appears during pregnancy and predisposes the mother to the onset of T2DM.

Symptoms



Symptoms consistent with high blood sugar levels, for which it is important to contact a doctor and check blood glucose levels, are: intense thirst, need to urinate often, tiredness, weight loss, and difficult to cure urinary tract, skin or dental infections.

Diagnosis



Diabetes is diagnosed using two blood glucose values: $> \text{ or } = 126 \text{ mg/dL}$ under fasting conditions and $> 200 \text{ mg/dL}$ at any time of the day, or with two consecutive HbA1C measurements $> 6.5\%$ (48 mmol/L).

Therapy



Diabetes can be controlled by exercising regularly, following a balanced diet, losing any excess weight and, where necessary, using oral or injected glucose-lowering medication or insulin.